
SH6 BLENHEIM TO NELSON SPEED REVIEW

Summary of the speed review consultation

WAKA KOTAHİ NZ TRANSPORT AGENCY

OCTOBER 2020

1. BACKGROUND

In August 2019, Waka Kotahi consulted with the community, iwi, local councils, businesses and stakeholders on proposed safe and appropriate speeds for the stretch of State Highway 6 (SH6) from Blenheim to Nelson, in the Marlborough region.

Many members of the local community and Waka Kotahi recognised the need for a review of this stretch of road. In the ten years between 2009 and 2018, 20 people were killed and 92 were seriously injured travelling this route. The high-risk nature of this road meant there was a strong call for change.

No matter what causes a crash, speed is always a factor in the severity. Put simply, the speed of impact can be the difference between walking away or being carried away from a crash.

This speed review is one of many improvements in the pipeline for SH6. Several safety improvement projects in the top of the South region have been underway over the last few years. This includes a combination of both infrastructure improvements and speed reviews. Lowering speed limits now is the most immediate and effective action we can take to prevent more deaths and serious injuries on this road.

The 110km stretch caters to a wide range of competing travel needs and vehicle types. SH6 is a key route for locals, tourists, businesses and agriculture, along with freight travelling between Nelson, Blenheim and Picton. It's also a commuter, cyclist and tourist route. There are several different roadside environments extending from Blenheim to Nelson with a range of speed limits varying between 50km/h and 100km/h.

2. CONSULTATION PROCESS

Prior to undertaking the formal consultation process, we completed numerous steps, including a speed management technical assessment of the road. This identified the various existing speed limits on the road were not safe and appropriate for the current road characteristics and roadside environments along this corridor.

Between 2017 and 2019, initially as part of a Safe Roads Alliance, we engaged with local stakeholders including Nelson City Council, Marlborough District Council, Tasman District Council, iwi, schools, the Police, the Automobile Association (AA) and other road user groups. These organisations provided us with feedback and local knowledge on how people use the road and their concerns. This helped us to decide: if a speed limit change was the best thing to do to improve road safety; where new speed limits could begin or end; and if any other safety improvements might be needed.

On 15 October 2019, Waka Kotahi started formal consultation on proposed new speed limits for SH6 Blenheim to Nelson. Consultation was open for four weeks and closed on 12 November 2019.

Consultation materials provided evidence that supported the proposed safe and appropriate speed limits. This included current travel speeds and the characteristics of the road.

The consultation was advertised on radio stations, through social media and local print publications. A media release was issued on 14 October 2019 and resulted in online and print media coverage.

People were able to submit their views through the electronic form, hard copy submission forms, via email or by phone.

3. CONSULTATION QUESTION

The consultation phase is used to seek any additional information from stakeholders or the public that will help inform the decision about the proposed speed limit changes.

During formal consultation we proposed new speed limits and asked the public the following question “**Are there any other factors that we should consider when making our decision?**”

We consider all factors raised during formal consultation when making our decision on new permanent speed limits.

4. SUMMARY AND RESPONSE TO SUBMISSIONS

Across the four-week consultation period, we received a total of 1,149 submissions. We appreciated the response from the community and thank all those who provided their feedback.

The following themes, ideas and concerns were highlighted during consultation period:

Issues / Concerns		Waka Kotahi Comments
Install variable school speed zones; reduce speed limits further	Some submitters would like to see speed limits reduced further, requesting a lower variable speed zone in Canvastown and/or Hira of 50km/h, 40km/h or 30km/h, while some have supported the 60km/h variable speed zone but rejected the 80km/h permanent speed limit change	School Speed Zones are set at 60km/hr for rural schools and 40km/hr for urban schools where the speed limit is 50km/hr
Reduce speeds in built-up areas only	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Many submitters believe speed reductions around the schools and built-up areas in Havelock and Pelorus Bridge are essential. Pelorus Bridge was identified as a dangerous area, and the community raised concerns for the safety of tourists and pedestrians	<ul style="list-style-type: none">The current seasonal speed limit in Pelorus Bridge will be changed to a permanent 60km/hr speed to adequately reflect the number of people using the café, campground, walking tracks and swimming holes year-round.The Havelock west-bound approach 70km/hr speed limit will be replaced by an extended 50km/hr. This will reduce speeds at the Queen Charlotte Drive intersection
Reduce speed limits in built-up areas and residential zones only	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Some submitters believe that speeds around built-up areas and residential roads with difficult intersections, such as Atawhai and Havelock, should be reduced	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Speed limits in built-up areas are being reduced. Havelock will have an extended 50km/hr speed limit, and Atawhai will be posted at 60km/hr. Between Atawhai and Nelson the speed will be reduced from 100km/hr to 80km/hr
Reduce speed limits to 80km from Rai Valley to Nelson only	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Many submitters agree with proposed reductions for the area between Rai Valley to Nelson only, while others understand the need for other reductions through the wider corridor	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Rai Valley township to Atawhai, and from Atawhai to Nelson, will be reduced to 80km/hr, with a 60km/hr School Speed Zone at Hira.Atawhai will be reduced from 80km/hr to 60km/hr

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Extend the scope of the speed review	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Include Rai Valley township and the area around the local school in the review 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Rai Valley township will remain at 60km/hr. There is currently a 40km/hr advisory School zone
Don't change any speed limits	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Lower speeds are unnecessary Focus on infrastructure safety improvements Will cause increased driver frustration, distraction and congestion. Some submitters feel that if the speed has to change over the route they'd prefer it to be reduced to 90km/h, than the proposed 80km/h 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Lowering the speed limit gives more margin for error if a driver makes a mistake and lowers the energy of the crash should one occur. Reducing speed limits to safe and appropriate speeds for the road is the most immediate and effective action we can take to reduce deaths and serious injuries No matter what causes a crash, speed is always factor in the severity of the crash outcomes. The increase in travel time is likely to be less than 10 minutes for the whole stretch The following sections will be reduced from 100km/hr to 90km/hr: <p style="margin-left: 20px;">Renwick to Havelock</p> <p style="margin-left: 20px;">Havelock to Pelorus Bridge</p> <p style="margin-left: 20px;">Pelorus Bridge to Rai Valley</p>
Impacts to the local economy	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Slower speeds add extra costs to freight companies and local businesses, impacting the economy 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The increase in travel time between Blenheim and Nelson will be a few minutes with the reduced speed limits. The increase in travel time is only 9-12 minutes for the whole stretch
Reducing speed limits will not change the crash stats/prevent people dying	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Some submitters feel speed limits are not the problem, therefore will not prevent further deaths and serious injuries 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Reducing speed limits to safe and appropriate speeds for the road is the most immediate and effective action we can take to reduce deaths and serious injuries No matter what causes a crash, speed is always factor in the severity of the crash outcomes There are several infrastructure projects underway in the Top of the South region. These, alongside safe and appropriate speeds, will make SH6 safer for everyone
Driver behaviour	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Dangerous drivers pose a bigger risk to safety Speed is not the issue 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Under the safe system approach and Road to Zero strategy, the aim is to focus less on crash causes and

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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Lower speeds will lead to even greater driver frustration and dangerous overtaking Invest in educating young drivers before reducing speed limits 	more on harm reduction. This means allowing for drivers to make mistakes and reducing harm if they do make an error
Existing road design and layout	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Current lack of passing lanes and slow vehicle bays No opportunities to over-take Invest in better road infrastructure before changing speed limits. A need for additional lanes, slow vehicle bays or passing lanes 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Several infrastructure improvements are underway in the Top of the South. These, alongside safe and appropriate speeds, will make SH6 safe for everyone Some shoulder widths are currently being increased to provide safety benefits for cyclists and all other road users Some changes to yellow No-Passing lines will be undertaken to make it clearer where it is not safe to overtake A new roundabout will soon be constructed at the SH62/SH6 intersection near Renwick
Heavy vehicles	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Reduce speeds further to ensure heavy vehicles can travel at safer and more appropriate speeds Road freight companies expressed commercial concerns over speed reductions 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Lowering the speed limit gives more margin for error if a driver makes a mistake and lowers the energy of the crash should one occur. The increase in travel time is likely to be less than 10 minutes for the whole stretch. Some shoulder widths are currently being increased to provide safety benefits for cyclists and all other road users.
Signage	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Increase speed limit signs throughout the route, in particular around tight corners or bends Add a stop sign where Glen Road intersects with State Highway 6 to support safe turning 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Glen Rd has been changed from Give Way to Stop control. More signs will be installed advising of the speed on each section of road, and entry thresholds at townships will be made more obvious
Cycling	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Concern for cyclist safety in several areas along this section of State Highway 6. The Whangamoa Saddle and Hira were considered particularly dangerous for cyclists. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The Nelson side of the Whangamoa Saddle will be reduced from 100km/h to 60km/h. This will make it much safer when cyclists and other slower vehicles are present
Traffic volume	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The community expressed concerns over the growing traffic volume due to the 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> SH6 along the Haven waterfront will be posted at 60km/hr or 80km/hr to

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	increasing population, heavy vehicles, cruise ships and tourism	<p>improve safety for increased levels of use</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The new speed limits make the roads safer for everyone
Pedestrian, cyclist and school children safety	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Feedback expressed considerable concern that current speed limits put pedestrians and cyclists at risk from vehicles 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> SH6 along the Haven waterfront will be posted at 60km/hr or 80km/hr to improve safety for increased levels of use Lower speeds will make the road safer for everyone. More school speeds zones will be implemented to reduce traffic speeds around areas where children are present at each end of the school day
Enforcement	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Some feedback expressed the view that rather than reduce speed limits along the corridor, enforcement of current speeds would be more effective “Greater policing of the existing limit would help here.” “More focus needs to be put on prosecuting people who hold up queues of traffic resulting in frustration and poor overtaking decisions. Leave the speed limit alone.” 	Under the safe system approach, we focus on reducing harm. While we acknowledge that a lack of compliance can often be one of the causes of a crash, a lower speed reduces the severity of the outcome. The lower speed limit will result in fewer deaths or serious injuries
Property and intersections	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Submitters referenced several intersections along the corridor, which they consider dangerous, and need lower speeds 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Cable Bay Road intersection will be reduced from 100km/hr to 80km/hr Glen Rd has been changed from Give Way to Stop control, and the speed will be reduced to 80km/hr. Contour and boundary constraints prevent a full right turn bay from being possible at Glen Rd SH6 along the Haven waterfront will be posted at 60km/hr or 80km/hr to improve safety for increased levels of use, and to make access easier

5. DECISION

The table below shows the decisions on speeds for sections of SH6 consulted on between 15 October 2019 and 12 November 2019.

Multiple submissions expressed concern for the lowering of speed limits from 100km/h to 80km/h and requested Waka Kotahi consider a 90km/h speed limit instead. Waka Kotahi has since undertaken another technical review of the road and as a result, has concluded that speed limits of 90km/h would be a safe and appropriate speed to implement on the corridor between Renwick and Rai Valley. The other outcomes of the speed review are in line with the proposed speed limit changes.

The 90km/h limits are proposed to remain until June 2023, when they will be reviewed to ensure they are achieving the desired reduction in deaths and serious injuries.

The following speed limits outlined below will come into effect on Friday 18 December 2020:

SH6 Blenheim to Nelson	New speed limits from 18 December 2020
400m west of Rose St, Blenheim to 335m west of Jacksons Rd, Woodbourne	80km/h
340m west of Jacksons Rd, Woodbourne to 130m east of SH6/SIH63 Intersection, Renwick	80km/h (No change)
130m east of SH6/SIH63 Intersection to 250m north of Gee St, Renwick	50km/h
250m north of Gee St, Renwick, to 440m south of Mahakipawa Road, Havelock	90km/h
440m south of Mahakipawa Road to 60m south of Kavanagh Road, Havelock	50km/h
60m south of Kavanagh Road to 300m north-west of Clive St, Havelock	50km/h
300m north-west of Clive St, Havelock to 40m west of Wakamarina Rd, Canvastown	90km/h
40m west of Wakamarina Rd to 260m west of Tapps Rd, Canvastown	New 90km/h – 60km/h variable school zone

260m west of Tapps Rd, Canvastown to 320m south of Pelorus Bridge (southern abutment)	90km/h
320m south of southern abutment of Pelorus Bridge to 320m north-east of the northern abutment of Pelorus Bridge	60km/h
320m north-east of the northern abutment of Pelorus Bridge to 340m north of Hills Rd, Rai Valley	90km/h
340m north of Hills Rd to 180m north of Bryants Rd, Rai Valley	60km/h
180m north of Bryants Rd, Rai Valley to 770m north of Whangamoa Saddle Summit	80km/h
770m north of Whangamoa Saddle Summit to 280m north of Teal Valley Rd	60km/h
280m north of Teal Valley Rd to 25m south of Lud Valley Rd, Hira	80km/h
25m south of Lud Valley Rd to 105m south of Cable Bay Rd, Hira	New 80km/h - 60km/h variable school zone
105m south of Cable Bay Rd, Hira to 440m north-east of Allisdair St, Atawhai	80km/h
440m north-east of Allisdair St to 100m south-west of Atawhai Cres north, Atawhai	60km/h
100m south-west of Atawhai Cres north, Atawhai to 250m north-east of Trafalgar St, Nelson	80km/h

Map showing the permanent speed limits

6 Blenheim to Nelson new speed limits



6. SUBMISSIONS

You can view the submissions we received for this speed review [here](#)